



## **AGENDA**

### **Planning Commission Work Session**

**Tuesday, March 23, 2021, 6:00 pm**

Evans Community Complex, City Council Chambers, 1100 37<sup>th</sup> Street

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## **WORK SESSION**

**1. Roll Call:**

Chairman:	Lyle Achziger
Vice-Chairman:	Kalen Myers
Commissioners:	Billy Castillo
	Mark LeClere
	Robert S. Phillips, III
	David Woolman

**2. Master Plan Update: Draft Master Plan Vision and Values statement; draft Economic Resiliency chapter discussion.**

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# PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION

## AGENDA REPORT

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**DATE:** March 23, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Master Plan Update – Draft Master Plan Vision and Values statements;  
Draft Economic Resiliency chapter discussion

**PRESENTED BY:** Anne Best Johnson, Community Development Director  
Allison Moeding, Economic Development Manager

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### ITEM DESCRIPTION:

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A strategic Master Plan is based on data regarding the existing conditions of a community as well as the goals and vision for the future. Over the past year, City staff has been preparing to undertake the Master Plan Update. Over the past 8 months, the Master Plan Steering Committee along with staff and a team of consultants have been reviewing the existing conditions in Evans and the region. Armed with this existing conditions baseline, the Master Plan Steering Committee is starting to make recommendations for the future of the City.

Recommended principles and actions in a Master Plan need to be specific to guide implementation but broad to allow for flexibility.

The update to the Evans Master Plan will be organized by a set of Vision and Values Statements. These four Vision and Values Statements will be used in each chapter of the Master Plan, ensuring the statements are woven into the Master Plan for implementation. The over-arching Vision and Values Statements for the Master Plan update are listed below however, more details regarding each can be found in Attachment 1.

1. Quality of life, within reach
2. Your multi-cultural hometown
3. Redefining work-life balance
4. Connected to everything that matters
5. Distinctly welcoming

These statements are then woven into each chapter to ensure the focus for the Master Plan is not lost. Each Chapter of the Master Plan will contain data, findings and analysis which have been presented to the Master Plan Steering Committee.

Each Chapter will be structured with Principles, Goals and Strategies to achieve the over-arching Vision and Values Statements. Principles provide the facts and value statements. Goals provide a targeted method to meet and measure outcomes. Strategies are the actions required to achieve the goals and illustrate progress. Strategies will fall into consistent categories throughout the Master Plan for consistency and include: Code Adjustment, Capital Improvement Plan, Policy Recommendations; Additional Planning Requirements; and Miscellaneous.

While the structure of the Master Plan Update is established to apply to each Chapter, the content of each Chapter will be reflective on Evans' unique attributes and goals. The Chapter Principle

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Statements will be broad to capture future flexibility and changing conditions while specific to communicate the intended message.

The Economic Development Chapter has received approval in its draft stage by the Master Plan Steering Committee and City Council. Staff has prepared this Work Session memo to keep the Planning Commission informed of progress toward an updated Master Plan. This Chapter, and every Chapter to be presented in the future, will be organized consistently. Each Chapter will contain the following content:

- An overview, data, findings and an analysis regarding the current state of Evans as it relates to the Chapter subject will be provided with the final draft;
- The Principles will be presented along with confirmation of the specific Vision and Values Statements;
- Following the Principles for each Chapter will be a “Why” statement which correlates to the overview/data Section of the Chapter;
- There will be Action steps to achieve the principles based upon methods of implementation including plan development, policy updates, or Code revision, for example.

The attached document contains the Vision and Values Statements as well as the Economic Resiliency Chapter. The next step will be for the consulting team to formalize the Vision and Values statements into Chapters of the Master Plan.

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**FINANCIAL SUMMARY:**

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None.

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**REQUESTING FROM PLANNING COMMISSION:**

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Staff requests Planning Commissioners to provide comments regarding the draft Vision and Values Statements as well as the draft Economic Resiliency Chapter of the Master Plan update.

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

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Attachment 1: Powerpoint Presentation



# Evans Master Plan

Vision and Values

Economic Resiliency



# VISION & VALUES

Evans, Colorado is positioned at the intersection of everything that makes Northern Colorado one of the most desirable destinations in the nation. We are at the confluence of the South Platte and the Big Thompson rivers, with parks and natural amenities accentuating our outdoor lifestyle. We are close to everything, at the crossroads of US85 and Highway 34 providing quick connections to this dynamic and vibrant region. And we are proud to be a convergence of opportunity wrapped in the warmth of a welcome small-town and multicultural environment.

**Welcome to Evans: Where Rivers and Opportunities Meet!**



# QUALITY OF LIFE, WITHIN REACH

*Evans offers a wide variety of the best of the Colorado lifestyle without the high price tag.*

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Plan Priorities: Neighborhoods, Great Parks, Housing Options, Affordability

Confluence of: Affordability, Great Neighborhoods/Amenities



# YOUR MULTICULTURAL HOMETOWN

*Evans is a welcoming hometown with a heritage rooted in agriculture, and a lively culture proudly featuring our diverse flavors, sounds and arts.*

Plan Priorities: Neighborhoods, Great Parks, Housing Options, Affordability

Confluence of: Culture, Heritage

A woman with long hair is sitting on a bench or ledge in front of a modern building. She is looking down at a laptop computer. The building has large windows and a covered walkway with a metal frame. The word "COMMUNITY" is visible on the building's facade. The image has a blue tint.

# REDEFINING WORK+LIFE BALANCE

*Everything that makes Evans a great place to live also means it's a great place for business. We're growing our reputation, welcoming emerging businesses with our talented workforce in a pro-business atmosphere.*

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Plan Priorities: Economic Development, Business Diversification, Small Business Support

Confluence of: Great Neighborhoods, Economic Development



# CONNECTED TO EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS

*Evans offers nature close at hand, with vibrant cultural and economic opportunities within easy reach.*

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Plan Priorities: Economic Development, Business Diversification, Small Business Support  
Confluence of: Transportation Connections, Amenity Development, New Business Growth



# DISTINCTLY WELCOMING

*Evans offers a fertile community where you can sink roots, a place to wrap yourself in warmth and pride of calling 'home.'*

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Plan Priorities: Community Identify, Quality Neighborhoods, Placemaking

Confluence of: Amenity Development, Small Town + Growing Community

A blue-tinted photograph of tall grasses with seed heads against a clear sky. The grasses are in the foreground, slightly out of focus, with their seed heads pointing upwards. The background is a solid, light blue color.

**Evans: Where Rivers and Opportunities Meet!**

# Economic Resilience

- Principles & Strategies Review

- 1 Evans will diversify its local economy
- 2 US85 will be renewed and bolstered as an economic driver of Evans
- 3 Evans will Create New Opportunities for Retail Growth
- 4 Evans will foster a Sense of Place and enrich its Community Identity
- 5 Evans will Leverage Local Assets and build on its community strengths



Quality of  
Life Within  
Reach



Multicultural  
Hometown



Redefining  
Work-Life  
Balance



Connected to  
Everything that  
Matters



Distinctly  
welcoming



Quality of Life  
Within Reach



Redefining  
Work-Life Balance

Maintaining and building on Evans' strength as a great place to live in the region is essential to this plan. This principle is intended to focus economic development efforts to be more strategic and effective in responding to changes in the economy. Due in part to the condition of the oil and gas industry, with its ongoing boom and bust cycles, diversifying the economy will help stabilize and build municipal revenues to maintain high quality of life. Achieving greater diversity in the economy will require long-term and focused commitment.

## **Principle 1: Evans will diversify its local economy**

## Principle 1: Evans will diversify its local economy

- Complete an Economic Development Strategic Plan with focus on key economic development issues outlined in this chapter.
- Collaborate with regional partners including Upstate Colorado, East Colorado Small Business Development Center, Aims Community College, University of Northern Colorado, Weld County School District 6, and others on a coordinated regional approach to economic and workforce development.
- Define and manage incentives and business services and seek to retain and expand Evans businesses.
- Explore locations for a community Maker Space that can help create and nourish an entrepreneurial infrastructure.
- Explore opportunities for agricultural, value-added industry expansion leveraging existing resources in the regional economy.



## Principle 1: Evans will diversify its local economy

- Engage with local business owners, including Latinx businesses, to seek opportunities to market and promote their unique offerings.
- Monitor and enhance access to the local broadband internet infrastructure to understand if there are opportunities for improvements that can be used to benefit home-based workers and home-based businesses.
- Form partnerships with local businesses, City government, and educational institutions to identify workforce development opportunities.
- Celebrate business achievements, especially those tied to previous city support or incentives. This could take the form of an annual report, celebration breakfast, quarterly meetings with targeted developers, or other networking events.



Connected to  
Everything that Matters



Redefining  
Work-Life Balance

Investment follows vision. Economically, US85 connects Evans to the world with a major international airport to the south and the University to the north, this is Evans' prime employment center. This is also the southern and northern gateway to the community and establishes the perception of the community.

## **Principle 2: US85 will be renewed and bolstered as an economic driver of Evans**



## **Principle 2: US85 will be renewed and bolstered as an economic driver of Evans**

- Revisit the corridor vision plan for US85 that addresses infrastructure challenges, identifies solutions, and creates an inviting gateway.
- Using the vision plan, review applicability and original intent of the US85 Corridor Overlay District and revise code as necessary.
- Identify quick win gateway/identity project to build and construct shortly following adoption of vision plan.
- Identify cost of improvements and seek opportunities to finance specific public infrastructure improvements through the ERA, including possible debt financing using tax increment revenue.
- Establish investment policy and types of assistance the ERA can provide to private development, including sample development agreements.



## **Principle 2: US85 will be renewed and bolstered as an economic driver of Evans**

- Work with Upstate Colorado to create a marketing plan and collateral to promote the area to site selectors and manufacturers.
- Complete an inventory of properties and identify prime development opportunities and build relationships with property and business owners.
- Identify catalyst parcels for the City/ERA to acquire and market for investment.
- Continue aggressive marketing of ERA property located at US85/31st Street.
- Promote industrial/commercial flex-space that can promote employment density.
- Explore potential railroad spur line to facilitate industrial development.
- Explore pursuing a USEPA Brownfield Grant to aid in funding assessment and redevelopment visioning.



Quality of Life  
Within Reach



Multicultural  
Hometown

The retail tax base generates a large proportion of the City's revenues. While Evans property tax rates are among the lowest in Weld County and Colorado, the lower property tax rate puts pressure on revenue from retail sales tax to maintain the level of services residents have come to enjoy. Identifying and securing prime retail locations will ensure that the best locations are available when the market is ready to invest. 37th Street is the only arterial with direct connection from I-25 to US-85. It is a primary traffic route proximate to much of the residential needed to support retail development. In addition, Evans has multicultural Latinx retail offerings that are unique to Northern Colorado.

## **Principle 3: Evans will create new opportunities for retail growth**



### Principle 3: Evans will create new opportunities for retail growth

- **Establish 37th Street as the Primary Retail Corridor via Land Use and Transportation Plans.**
- Establish primary commercial nodes on 37th at 23rd Ave and US85, and secondary nodes at 11th Ave and 35th Ave.
- Update the zoning code to support appropriate levels of retail development at designated intersections, exploring mixed-use options and neighborhood integration.
- Create a unique corridor design aesthetic, supported by placemaking principles and good urban design.
- Create a program promoting the benefits of supporting small/local businesses.
- Ensure that City Codes encourage redevelopment and infill to minimize barriers to opening business and promote flexible mixed-use opportunities.



### Principle 3: Evans will create new opportunities for retail growth

- Create multi-lingual roadmaps describing processes for opening business, including food establishments.
- Increase funding for and promote expanded participation in the Storefront Improvement Program including different languages interpreted in the information packet to assist growing local businesses, including expansion of the program to include signage.
- Retail will be recognized as an important lifestyle amenity for a well-rounded community.
- Monitor and address retail development within the framework of the Economic Development Strategic Plan.



Quality of Life  
Within Reach



Multicultural  
Hometown



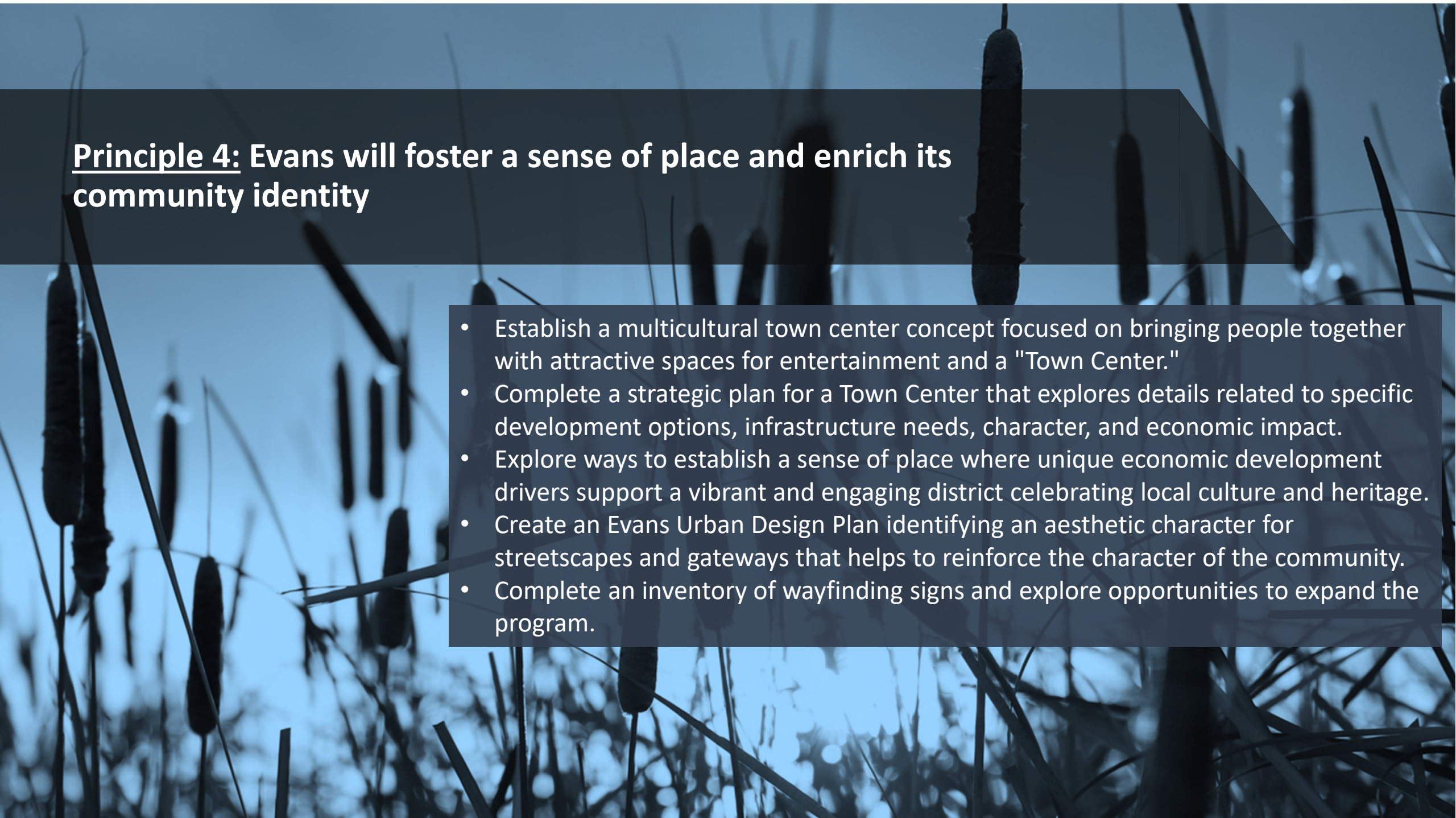
Redefining  
Work-Life Balance



Distinctly  
welcoming


Establishing Evans' identity promotes a sense of loyalty and pride in the community. It also helps promote Evans as a place to stay and invest. Having a clear sense of identity also helps promote new housing opportunities as developers are more likely to have confidence in the market. Building from our multicultural heritage, we identify, promote and build a sense of place that will position Evans as a distinct community in the region.

**Principle 4: Evans will foster a sense of place and enrich its community identity**



## **Principle 4: Evans will foster a sense of place and enrich its community identity**

- Establish a multicultural town center concept focused on bringing people together with attractive spaces for entertainment and a "Town Center."
- Complete a strategic plan for a Town Center that explores details related to specific development options, infrastructure needs, character, and economic impact.
- Explore ways to establish a sense of place where unique economic development drivers support a vibrant and engaging district celebrating local culture and heritage.
- Create an Evans Urban Design Plan identifying an aesthetic character for streetscapes and gateways that helps to reinforce the character of the community.
- Complete an inventory of wayfinding signs and explore opportunities to expand the program.



## **Principle 4: Evans will foster a sense of place and enrich its community identity**

- **Recognize the importance of how a sense of place and community identity impacts new housing opportunities and economic development.**
- Work with the Greeley/Evans School District to ensure that K-12 education remains a positive community identifier and source of local pride.
- Prioritize placemaking and urban design strategies with all future road construction to enhance Evans' sense of place and cohesive identity.
- Create and fund unique programs reflective of Evans' community character.
- Embrace the Platte River and a natural asset and create an entertainment venue/amphitheater with a design that relates to the natural environment and connects to the trail network.
- Develop a clear branding and communications strategy to share and support Evans' values and effective community promotion.



Quality of Life  
Within Reach



Multicultural  
Hometown



Connected to  
Everything that Matters

Evans is a diverse community with a strong workforce. The community is inviting and affordable. The Evans story needs to be told, and those businesses already here need opportunities to grow. Evans will focus first on supporting growth of existing local businesses, with secondary focus on attraction.

## **Principle 5: Evans will leverage local assets and build on its community strengths**



## **Principle 5: Evans will leverage local assets and build on its community strengths**

- Develop and maintain a comprehensive inventory of local businesses.
- Seek opportunities to promote recreational opportunities as an economic driver.
- Work with Aims Community College on workforce training opportunities for residents (Triad between local government, universities, and private industry).
- Work with the Greeley/Evans School District on workforce and career training and help create a strong pipeline to Aims Community College.
- Partner with the Evans Area Chamber of Commerce in business networking efforts.
- Set up a small business events and engage with small business owners including Latinx businesses.
- Work with the Small Business Development Center to identify and support local business startups.
- Explore strategies for expanding upon and utilizing urban renewal tools available to the Evans Redevelopment Agency.
- Develop a marketing/public relations/communications and branding campaign to market Evans as “A Place to Launch your Dream.”